



## National Safety Council

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### Position/Policy Statement

#### **Pedestrian Safety**

The National Safety Council urges all governmental jurisdictions to adopt and conduct a comprehensive program for pedestrian safety which incorporates the following elements:

1. Assign responsibility for pedestrian safety at each governmental level.
2. Uniform and comprehensive reporting and analysis of pedestrian collisions that would allow the identification of pedestrian accident problems, including training of police on investigation of pedestrian accidents.
3. Public education for all pedestrian age groups and drivers on how to walk safely in and near traffic with special emphasis programs for older adults and children.
4. Pedestrian safety instruction in pre-school and child day care facilities along with instruction in the classroom for grades K-5.
5. Pedestrian safety awareness as part of driver education programs.
6. Provision of safe access to and from school, which includes anytime school is open for attendance, based upon joint efforts of community and traffic engineers, police and fire departments, parents, and school authorities, including "Safe Route to School" planning and operation, which may include adult crossing guards and school safety patrols.
7. Land use and facilities planning to provide a pedestrian "friendly" environment.
8. Traffic engineering study and improvements.
9. Uniform pedestrian laws and ordinances.
10. Enforcement of regulations relating to the safety of pedestrians.
11. Categorical funding and priority program status for Section 217 funding at the national level for pedestrian safety.

12. Work zone traffic controls, educate drivers and those who work on roadways, DOT, police and fire departments, and others engaged in roadway traffic control of the work site.
13. Posting road signs at suitable locations to alert drivers to increased probability of alcohol-impaired pedestrians. In addition, signs may also be used to mark locations at which an alcohol-impaired pedestrian fatality occurred.

The National Safety Council urges all governmental jurisdictions to initiate, organize and implement ongoing comprehensive community-based pedestrian safety programs, such as the **WALK ALERT** National Pedestrian Safety Program and the Pedestrian Protection Programs of the American Automobile Association.

**Comment:**

Alcohol impaired pedestrian fatalities are routinely encountered in road traffic incidents. The American Addiction Centers inform that, "Since 1991, a higher percentage of pedestrians than drivers killed in traffic accidents have been drunk". [AAC, Walking Drunk] The use of *suitable* road signs to alert drivers can assist in reducing such injuries and saving lives. Road signs in some jurisdictions indicate a school crossing or warn drivers about children, elderly, or animals. An internet search found a news report of a village (Pecica) in Romania that erected road signs that "*show a person crawling on their knees while clutching a glass in one hand*" [Hough, 2010] posted in "*popular nightspot areas close to the city's bars and restaurants*". [ibid.] The mayor was quoted, "*We must warn drivers that sometimes people who have little control over their actions can suddenly appear in the road.*" Residents indicated "*they found the signs amusing*". [ibid.] Following adverse media, it was promptly announced, "*Following the excessive coverage of the road signs the local government decided to change them.*" with eventual new ones warning of "Other Dangers". [Nassim, 2010] The following sign would be more suitably specific to the warning of the increased risk for the area:



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